# New York Theatre Critics' Reviews 1949

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THEATRE OPENINGS

"Cabalgata".

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NEW YORK POST HOME NEWS
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS
NEW YORK MIRROR
NEW YORK WORLD TELEGRAM
NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE
NEW YORK TIMES
NEW YORK SUN


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# "Cabalgata"

**Daily Mirror**

JULY 8, 1949

## 'Cabalgata' Colorful Revue That Is Swiftly Paced

By ROBERT COLEMAN.

Impresario S. Hurok brought Daniel Cordoba's ingratiating troupe of Spanish artists to the Broadway Theatre last evening in a spirited and colorful revue called "Cabalgata." The first-night audience appeared to be predominantly Latin, and it gave the talented visitors a rousing welcome.

Though there are no Escuderos, Amayas, Argentinas or Argentinitas in the cast, there are many gifted performers who dance, sing and play with such verve, such an apparent desire to please, that the evening could not be other than pleasant, enjoyable and rewarding.

Cordoba, with the assistance of musical director Ramon Bastida, has devised solos and ensembles that range from popular to classic, that blend comedy, drama and folklore, that offer a series of stunning pictures of an exotic land.

Of the company, we liked best Carmen Vazquez, who contributed beautiful rhythms via heel taps and castanets. She has poise, polish and personality. Other dancers meriting salutes are Pefita Marco, Floriana Alba, Pilar Calvo, Aurea Reyes, Jose Toledano, Paco Fernandez, Julio Toledo, Sebastian Castro and Fernando Vargas.

Heading the singers are Miguel Herrero, Rosa de Avila, Enrique Barrera, Victor Torres and Rafael Hernan. Jose Cortes at the piano, and Manuel Medina and Paco Millet on the guitars, offer excellent musical accompaniment.

"Cabalgata" comes to New York after a seven-year tour of Spain, Latin America and the West Coast. It has a cast of 60, which makes it the largest Spanish company to play here in many years.

Some of the numbers are offered before drapes, and others in full stage, with a handsome picture-frame background. The costumes and settings are authentic and gorgeous. They encompass a number of provinces, offering a musical Cook's Tour of the Iberian Peninsula.

"Cabalgata" wastes little time on words. It speaks through the feet, hands, figures of its graceful performers. There are no lulls. It moves with express-train speed and admirable precision. We liked it a lot, and think you will, too. That is, if you care for Latin dancing, and most of us do.

**"CABALGATA"**

A Spanish musical revue staged by Daniel Cordoba; choreography by Mr. Cordoba, musical direction by Ramon Bastida, presented by S. Hurok at the Broadway Theatre, July 7, 1949, featuring the following: Carmen Vazquez, Papita Marco, Floriana Alba, Pilar Calvo, Aurea Reyes, Jose Toledano, Paco Fernandez, Julio Toledo, Sebastian Castro, Fernando Vargas, Miguel Herrero, Rosa de Avila, Enrique Barrera, Victor Torres, Rafael Hernan, Manuel Medina, Paco Millet, and Jose Cortes.

**The Sun**

JULY 8, 1949

By WARD MOREHOUSE.

***Colorful and Monotonous.***

Those of the first-night contingent who haven't fled to the beaches or the Berkshires turned up at the Broadway Theater last evening to receive the Spanish revue, "Cabalgata," which has arrived via Madrid, Lima, San Francisco and Terra del Fuego. Notwithstanding pleasant interludes here and there, "Cabalgata" leaves me unresponsive. But perhaps it belongs to the Music and Dance department; Drama got in by mistake.

"Cabalgata," first produced in Spain in 1942, is done in two acts and eighteen scenes and we're told that in seven years it has played for more than 2,000 performances, many of them before Latin American audiences. It offers a great deal of zestful and graceful regional dancing, colorful ensemble groupings, some nice singing and some charming folk numbers, such as the dance of the ribbon pole from "Rondolla Aragonesa" and "Song of the Washerwomen" from "Galician Airs."

The "Glory and Blood" sequence, depicting the excitement, the hysteria and the tragedy of bullfighting, with the scene outside the bullring at the time of Goya (1808) is effectively presented, and there is melody and merriment in "An Inn in Seville."

A cavalcade of song and dance, "Cabalgata" doesn't go in for sketches. The revue's outstanding performer is the dancer, Carmen Vazquez, who has style, spirit and looks. She can stop a show with her castanets, and she does. Jose Toledano, Julio Toledo and Fernandez Vargas are excellent dancers. Floriana Alba and Julio Toledo have an engaging number, "Madrid — 1900," and such people as Enrique Barrera, Miguel Herrero and Rosa De Avila have good voices.

I don't doubt that Daniel Cordoba's "Cabalgata" was the rage in Buenos Aires and Santiago and Lima, but I'm wondering if it isn't a bit out of place in the Broadway field and in the Broadway competition. It's a show that is easy upon the eye and ear and there were continued bursts of applause last night from those on all sides of me. I felt like something of an intruder at the Broadway Theater, and I probably was.

"Cabalgata," if you'll take the report of a play critic, is bright and colorful—and monotonous.

New York World-Telegram

JULY 8, 1949

## 'Cabalgata' Is Lively, Gay Spanish Fiesta

By WILLIAM HAWKINS.

There is a new Spanish festival at the Broadway Theater called "Cabalgata" which is refreshing, animated, unpretentious and unique.

Literally it is a cavalcade of Spanish dancing, and those in last night's audience who should certainly know agreed that it was authentic throughout. It is all in a Latin mood of high temperament, either making much of a little emotion or taking something big mightily hard.

It is tense physically, too, with a big company going all out for the house's entertainment. Many of the numbers have become classics in familiar fields of entertainment, but are rarely performed with such abandon or assurance.

**Violent Transitions.**

Here are castanets and tambourines, beating heels and snapping fingers. Here are the strangely sinuous movements and violent transitions so characteristic of these national dance figures.

The charm of it all is that it is varied and about as self conscious as a jumping bean. Never is there a suggestion of anyone trying to be arty. The rare solemn numbers are performed with respect and fierce tension. Most of the program has the air of a joyous fiesta.

Of the big company, Carmen Vazquez seems to stand in a class by herself. With staccato heels making a nearly continuous sound, she weaves around the stage with a willowy grace that brought her repeated vociferous accolades last night.

**Comedy and Speed.**

Pepita Marco reveals a wide range from her flinging peasant dance to the tense tragedy of the bull ring sequence.

For charm and vitality as well as great precision, Julio Toledo is outstanding among the men. His speed is fantastic and he reveals a pleasant sense of light comedy in the gay Mazurka. Paco Fernandez and Sebastian Castro also work with fine style through the program.

There is a familiar situation used with good effect in a number that pits classic against modern dancers. Here as in the classic Bolero, done by Castro and Aurea Reyes, there is a startling combination of the basic Spanish style which digs into the ground, and the ballet which constantly tries to escape it.

**Animation Routs Music.**

Toward the end of the program there is a series of brief duets done by the leading artists, each

of which had to be repeated by demand of last night's enthusiastic audience.

The finale builds to an exquisitely graceful, slow number by the women of the company, which gradually turns into a wild free-for-all contest by the whole company, far too animated to be bothered by musical accompaniment.

The backgrounds are simple and suggestive, the costumes more rich than gaudy, with frequent use of the Spanish delight in combining scarlet, magenta and pink together, and the musical accompaniment is sturdy and fleet.

It is a good, gay, lively evening's entertainment, particularly when musicals along Broadway are at such a premium.

## New York Post
### HOME NEWS
JULY 8, 1949

## Spanish Dance Revue Comes to Broadway

By RICHARD WATTS JR.

"Cabalgata," the Spanish musical show which arrived at the Broadway Theatre last night after what is said to be a run of seven years in Spain, Latin America and the West Coast, is bright, lively, good-looking and, for an outsider, rather given to monotony. There is some excellent dancing and singing in it, and some able and energetic performers, and a predominately Latin audience applauded so lustily that virtually every number had to be given twice. Certain non-Latins present were not quite that enthusiastic.

Essentially, "Cabalgata" is a revue for specialists. It is almost entirely devoted to the various Spanish types of dancing, and, while the differences in the styles are no doubt apparent to playgoing experts in the field, they are hardly clear enough to the rest of us to make for a show of any considerable variety. The numbers are pleasant to watch, and several of them are lovely in setting and costume. The entire entertainment has grace and style about it. That monotony persists, however.

**A Comparison**

It might seem inevitable that a show devoted to celebrating the glories of Latin dancing should be handicapped by this lack of variety, but, to my mind, this is not necessarily true. Shortly before the war, there was another Latin dancing revue in town, and, although it was not a great popular success and, I am sorry to say, was not unanimously applauded by the reviewers, it decidedly deserved to be. It was called "Mexicana," and I still remember it as one of the most enchanting shows I ever saw. To those few of us who were ardent, if ineffectual, cheerleaders for "Mexicana," the new revue is no triumphant substitute.

Although "Cabalgata" is not, and does not pretend to be, a completely rounded musical entertainment, it unquestionably has considerable merits as a lavish congress of national dancing. There is, in particular, a dancer named Carmen Vasquez, who is a genuinely brilliant performer, and, if there is no one in the cast with the earth-given frenzy of the familiar Carmen Amaya, Senorita Vasquez has the charm and grace to make up for any such lack. If there is an outstanding personal success in "Cabalgata," it is hers.

**Dance Experts**

While Carmen Vasquez dominates the proceedings, the rest of the dancers are clearly experts in their field. Ruggedness is perhaps not the prevailing trait of some of the men in the cast, but everyone in the show seems to possess grace, agility and skill, and each number is handled with artfulness and style. If I were to pick out a favorite among the numbers it would probably be the one in a Seville dancing school in 1840, but all of the individual episodes are attractive, colorful and tasteful.

It seems clear that Daniel Cordoba, a versatile gentleman who staged the show, did the choreography and designed the costumes, is a talented theatrical artist, and he has provided a field day for lovers of Spanish dancing. The qualities of "Cabalgata" are not inconsiderable ones and I do not intend to slight them. It is merely that I think it is fair to warn you that the new revue has many virtues, but, to me, excitement is not one of them.

## The New York Times
JULY 8, 1949

## AT THE THEATRE

That enterprising impresario, S. Hurok, who has brought us a diversity of talent from all points of the compass, is now offering an all-Spanish revue called "Cabalgata" at the Broadway Theatre. Since Mr. Hurok is a man of dependable taste, the news this morning is on the happy side. For this "Cabalgata," which we understand means a cavalcade, is a fresh, vibrant evening's entertainment from the initial click of the inevitable castanets.

Abounding in color, energy and excitement, it is not difficult to understand why "Cabalgata," first put together by Daniel Cordoba in Madrid in 1942, has been playing ever since in Spain and Latin America and most recently on the West Coast. Last night's audience clearly composed of many of the city's Spanish-speaking peoples, gave every evidence of having a gay time, and numbers repeatedly were forced to encores.

But this should not indicate that the pleasure is reserved for those who understand the language. "Cabalgata" is, more than anything else, a recital that covers just about the entire range of Spanish dancing, and even the few so-called vignettes in which there is singing "get across" by way of the dancers who, as the show's press-agent announces, do everything from A for Asturias, a dance typical of that province, to Z for Zambra, gypsy for jive.

As one of the leading ladies of the company, Carmen Vazquez is a remarkably handsome young woman endowed with great warmth and personality. She can dance the Asturias or a flamenco with infectious zest and spirit. And in addition she can add wit and delicacy. Pilar Calvo, who performs the aforementioned Zambra among others, is a dancer of considerable passion, while Pepita Marco and Floriana Alba are ballerinas of humor and light-heartedness. Among the worthy representatives of the stronger sex there are Jose Toledano Julio Toledo and Fernandez Vargas.

Among the ensemble numbers, the most arresting is "Rondalla Aragonesa," which concludes the first portion of the program. This consists of popular songs, serenaders, a ribbon-pole dance and a throbbing wind-up in a "Jota." This last-named bit is a whirlwind piece of dancing and music that fills the stage with electric rhythm. Not all the ensemble episodes are as good as this one. Some are on the pedestrian side, but even these benefit when performed by an enthusiastic company.

As might be expected, the costumes for "Cabalgata" are splendidly colorful. They lack, perhaps, some of the exaggerations to which Broadway is accustomed, but unquestionably they are authentic and in themselves help give the evening a quality of jubilance. The music, which Mr. Cordoba is supposed to have culled from an intensive study of some 9,000 melodies, offers among others, Latorre, Albeniz, Falla, Monreal and Quiroga. Virtually all of it is supple, and much of it is full of fire.

At first glance something like "Cabalgata" seemed rather forbidding. A full evening of Spanish music and dancing offered the prospect of monotony. There is sameness at times, to be sure, but there is ample variety, too. In brief, "Cabalgata," turned out to be a pleasant surprise on a summer's evening, and is more than welcome.

L. F.

## DAILY NEWS
JULY 8, 1949

# Spanish 'Cabalgata' at Broadway

By ROBERT SYLVESTER

If you are a legitimate member of the Spanish colony (or, indeed, even an illegitimate member) and if you are willing to holler out a fervent "Ole!" and really mean it, then "Cabalgata" is just about the best show in town.

For a brief while at the Broadway Theatre last night there was a goodly contingent of fake Spaniards, this observer among them, who held high hopes that this Spanish musical show would prove to be the one for which we've all been waiting. It started out strong enough, but, perhaps like the Spanish race itself, somehow managed to bog down.

An ordinary cabalgata is a Valencian festival, but this "Cabalgata" is one of the most interesting show business stories of recent years. It has toured the world and found favor almost everywhere. This reporter saw it two years ago in Havana, where it ran for months, and only a week or so ago it was surprising everybody on the West Coast with highly successful grosses. Produced by Daniel Cordoba and presented here by S. Hurok, it should have a sure success on Broadway until it wears out the local colony.

**The Splendid Carmen.**

It should and could have an even bigger success. "Cabalgata" needs only one or two items, plus some minor changes in routine, to widen its appeal. It needs a first class flamenco singer, for one thing. It also needs a little contrast in its provincial dances and music. Aside from such minor needs, it has almost everything else.

It has, for instance, a girl named Carmen Vazquez who is by all odds the finest castanetist since the late Encarnacion Lopez. It has choreography which should show our own balletomanes how stale the "Three Cornered Hat" and "Goyescas" ballets are as done by our phony Rus-